

Epilepsy?

H. N. Colman

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Epilepsy -

1. Epilepsy -
2. Epilepsy -
3. Hemorrhagic State of fever
4. Rheumatism do.
5. Rheumatism -
6. Rheumatism -
7. Consumption
8. Consumption
9. Menstruation

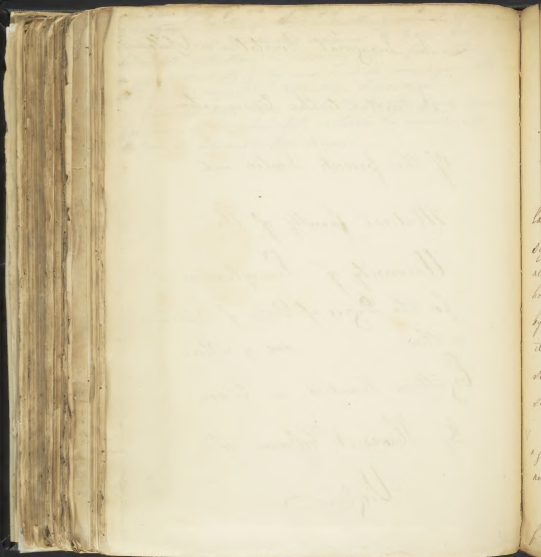


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This Essay forms a pretty good view of the whole question - although there is nothing novel to recommend it; yet the author appears to have paid considerable attention in drawing his information from a great variety of sources, and is consequently entitled to the merit of attention & research -

I would ask him what he particularly means by his term of congeniality, which he enumerates among the remote Causes of this disease. -

An Inaugural Dissertation on Epilepsy
Submitted to the Examination
Of the provost, Trustees, and
Medical Faculty of the
University of Pennsylvania
for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine
on the day of April
Eighteen Hundred and Eleven
By James A Coleman of
Virginia



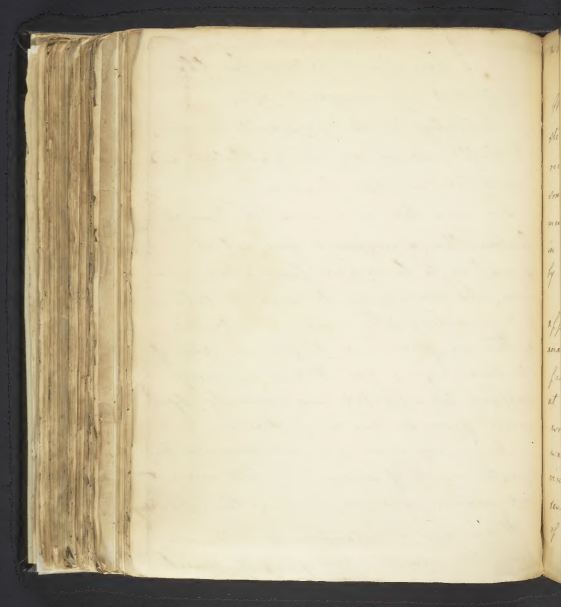
I have chosen Epilepsy for the
subject of my inaugural essay.

Treating of this formidable disease,
I shall first consider its pathology, and
next its method of cure.

The word Epilepsia is varied from epi-
lambanesthai, a compound word, which
signifies to be seized from above; epi-
above, and lambanesthai to seize, to take
hold of suddenly. This name was intended
by the old physicians to give an idea of
its divine origin; for it was anciently
supposed to be inflicted and cured only by a
secret power, or Shaman of Heaven.

Few if any diseases have been designated by
a greater variety of names in both ancient
and modern medical writings than Epilepsy.

It was named *Clampusia* by Hippocrates,
from the scintillations of light which



which strike the eyes of epileptic patients.

Aristotle denominated this disease *Morbus Muscularis*, from the uncommon strength of muscular exertion which occurs in the paroxysm. This exertion is sometimes so great, that several healthy men will be scarcely able to keep the patient in bed, or prevent him from injuring himself by the convulsive action of his limbs.

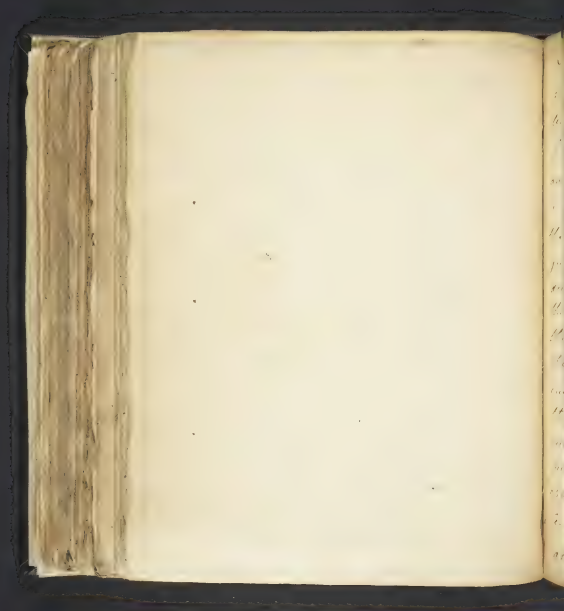
Plato called epilepsy the divine affection; supposing from the suddenness and singularity of the accession, and from the patient, (if standing or walking at the time), falling as in the act of worshipping a deity, that this disease was the immediate effect of a divine visitation, or that it was produced by a demon or celestial spirit taking possession of the human frame.



It is called Member committals
by King, and Committee by others,
either because the assemblies termed
Committee were adjourned, when any
one present happened to be seized with
a fit, or because it was observed to occur
more frequently in persons subject to
this disease during their attendance at
these assemblies.

Others termed this sort of Member
Jacks or Sluggs. This little connects the
idea of a disease and ^{power} ~~acted~~ ^{power} ~~action~~
intended at State with that of its
nature, by a strength and greatness of
nature, smaller in the little. The action
expressed in it is violent.

Voltaire has some remarks
on the crown, in the disease was
so common, though he is at no
very early period than the time of Calves



Helena say. The sight of the
passion is itself immediately, and the
termination is attended with shame
from the involuntary flow of both faces
and voice. Beside the face and voice
is beyond all self; for some imagine,
that it is sent from the moon, as a
judgement upon the impious, hence it
derived the name of Moon Mother. At
this age, it was Helena have obtained
this name from other causes;—perhaps from
the magnitude of the disease, as it was
customary to call every thing great as
the name Saur;—perhaps from the
one not being affected by human
and divine power; and perhaps from the
appearance of the patient in robes of
purple, and it is not improbable that by
all these may have conspired to

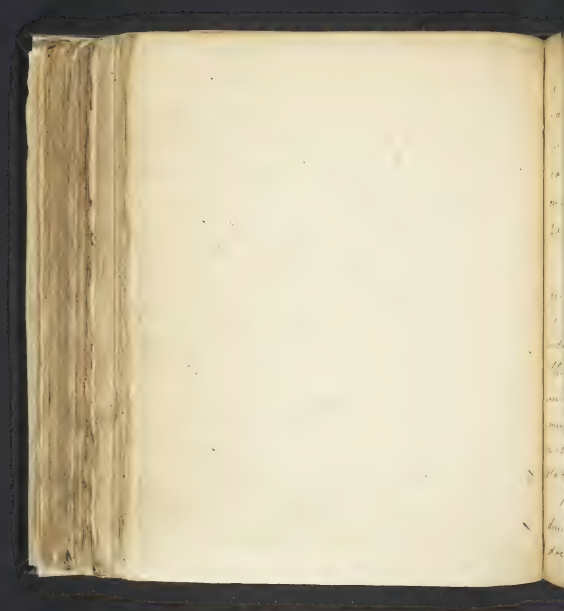


for the appellation

This disease is termed at one time
Vindictia, and at another Caduceus, by
the excellent Dr. Boerhaave. By the
former term he probably intends to give
an idea of its demoniacal strength,
and by the latter an idea of the
circumstances of the patient falling
down on its accession.

It is called *Analepsia* by Aetius;
the deviation of the French; and, falling
backward in the English. The technical
names sometimes are only a few of
those bestowed at different times on the
disease of which I am treating.

It is evident from the view of the
language of the ancient physicians
respecting epilepsy, that their ideas
of its causes and nature were extremely
vague and imperfect.



Sauvages, in considering epilepsy as a disease distinct from accidental convulsions, enumerates fourteen species instead of two, as I must, in two cases of epilepsy; but they amount only to varieties, and cannot in correct pathology be regarded as distinct diseases.

Dr. Cullen, in his classification of diseases, makes Epilepsy a genus, which he ranges in the *Cap. Mentes*, and under it admits two species, he says, "the disease must be defined, a convulsing in convulsions of the greater part of the muscles of voluntary motion, attended with a loss of sense, and ending in a state of insensibility and seeming sleep."

There is always a state of insensibility during the convulsions, but the paroxysm does not, according to the observations



of profuse sweat, almost terminate in
even a abscessed sweat.

Profuse sweat with great random
remarks, that "though he is great and though
thought much concerning the thing, yet he
cannot say he knows much more about
it now, than he did thirty years ago."

The remote causes of it profuse the
same as those of fever. They are general
and local. The general remote causes
are, intemperance in eating, drinking,
and sleeping; great and long exertion;
exposure to cold; retention of excrements;
suppression of excretion and secretions; sleeping
in the open air, and with wet clothes; exposure
to cold; dampness; congestion to the head. Intoxication
is also a cause of it. There is related in
ga in a history of a certain grammarian
who having retained too long from school



became epileptic. see Morgagni Letter IX.

Article VIII. Galen in this case considers the bile as the agent which gives the diseased influence. Morgagni says, cases of epilepsy from bile, and other irritating matters as worms, and even from diseases of the viscera, are common, not only among children, but likewise among adults.

The local causes are luxation of the skull, and compression of the brain; violent contusion in the brain and skull; humor; ragged sores on the surface according to 19. Sect; & scurvy tooth.

The predisposing cause is debility. Hence the paroxysms occur most frequently in the night, as is the case in other diseases which arise from debility of the system.

Hippocrates and Galen supposed



is liable to depend on the constitutional
state of system and humors. Both
of these states exist, at all times, the
predominant cause. But, to whom informs
us, that psoriasis is in time regarded
this theory rather as a fiction, than
as an established truth.

The disease has its seat principally in
the unguis, mucosae, and cutis. When
the excitability of these parts
is deeply affected by its causes, the
cure is difficult. Several of the exciting
causes of the disease are also exciting
causes; and in addition to those enumerated
I may add as exciting causes temperament,
climate, season, and the season of the
year: for all these appear to influence
the disease, both in regard to its time
of ^{recurrence} ~~renewal~~, and to the violence of the psoriasis.



Before the disease has become ~~fully~~^{fully}
established, when it has, various of the
above are among the most common of
the exciting causes of the paroxysms.

Fear, which has been already mentioned,
Love, rage, Anger, revenge, Pride, jealousy,
and ambition, are commonly observed to
induce the fit in persons predisposed
to the disease.

^{near, the} In the first or highest grade of the
paroxysms are so violent as to cause an
emission of semen, Micturition, and some-
times an effusion of bloody sweat.
The operations of the mind are totally
suspended.

In the second grade the symptoms
are less violent; the powers of the body
are not entirely prostrated by the force
of the paroxysm, and even the mind is
but not totally.



In the third grade, ~~the cause of~~ the
cause of the disease produces stupor,
paralysis of speech, and inability to
are the signs of a very serious in-
jury, and most common. motions
occasionally.

In the fourth grade it is so
mild that the eyes and face may be
a little convulsed.

In the 5th grade, Dr. Rush says,
the memory is not suspended during
the fit paroxysm; the patient has
perfect recollection of all that happens
on the preceding day.

The location of the paroxysm is
different in different patients, and
even in the same patient at different
times. The intervals between the
fits are also various. Sometimes



they are repeated several times in the same day, and sometimes they occur only every day or twice a month. In the latter case they are most apt to take place about the time of the menses. In many instances the paroxysms occur at regular periods of the moon.

The attack of epilepsy is preceded by a bitter taste in the mouth of some days duration. The pupils of the eyes are enlarged and vision is irregular.

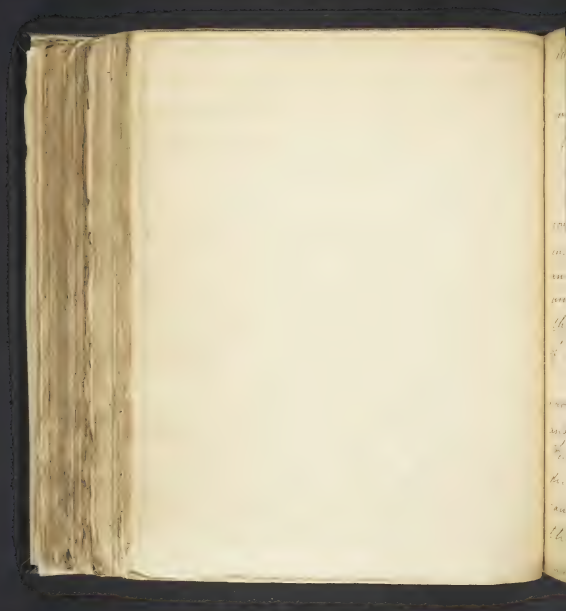
The reception of the paroxysm is sudden & violent, that the patient can never convey any idea of the preceding sensations. In many cases however certain & constant symptoms have no duration before the mind is overpowered. A sense of coldness, numbness, or pain, is felt



at the moderate cold; there is long
a latitude of the state, from the
heat, vertigo, and delirium; the face
is a good deal more inflamed, and gives
a good forehead to it.

Just before the fit a sensation of a
peculiar kind, as if an insect crawling
in the skin, or a slight cold upon,
or of a small sharp burn, or it is
some of the sort. Such sensation
is frequently named *aura epileptica*.

The same slowly advances toward
the fit. As soon as it arrives there
the patient, if standing, falls down,
becomes insensible, and the system
immediately suffers convulsions more
or less general and violent. The
patient is now insensible; his face is
distorted, red, or pale; and afterwards



lives and blood.

The value is various, circumstances
in different persons, and in different
periods of the life.

Treatment.

Our treatment of Leucorrhoea may be
considered as prophylactic, when we
endeavour to remove the predisposition,
and thereby prevent the accession, by
using remedies in the intervals; and
therapeutic, when we employ methods
of cure during the paroxysm.

In a prophylactic plan, our studies
should be directed to the remote causes,
and to the state of the predisposition.
For instance when intemperance in
drinking, has been a powerful remote
cause, this habit must be broken, and
the debility it may have induced
must be removed by proper regimen and



toxic medicines. When worms are
a remote cause, they should be re-
solved in, or the system should be
restored to its normal state of health.

Absolute temperance in all things,
(in eating, drinking, & exercise, mental
exercise, and sleeping) is (what the best
preventive measure), but it is difficult
to enforce it.

The medicines which have been
employed in the treatment of schistosomes,
have been more numerous than successful.
There have been successes with the anti-
cholinergic belladonna and toxic herbs.

Of those so-called antischistosomes,
Cinchona, Quinine, Strychnine, the factitious
Iron-cure, castor, and ^{magnesium} sulphate, have all
been employed, and perhaps the first of
these have been most successful
useful. Strychnine has, I believe, been



of considerable service in many cases,
though it may not often have effected
a perfect cure. The Persian Balsam, and
other similar medicines, have also been used,

The tones which have had most
substance tested in them, are, opoponax,
ammoniacum, the sulfate of iron, and
the white oxide of zinc.

In cases of Epilepsy Opium has been found
of great use in the disease by St. Barthelemy.
It should be administered in a full dose
a short time before the accession, in ~~some~~
cases in which the paroxysms occur at
regular periods.

Dr. Samuel Cooper had some
experience of the effects of ammoniacum
in Epilepsy, in the Pennsylvania
Hospital. He employed the leaf in
border with advantage. He also states
some communications made to him



by Dr. Haet, which show that this article may become an important remedy in certain stages and conditions of the disease, when physicians are better acquainted with its properties and its mode of affecting the system.

The Balsam of Peru has been found of great efficacy in convulsive diseases, arising from organic lesions, by Dr. Kirkland of Exeter; and in true Epilepsy by Dr. Rogers of this city.

Tobacco has proved a remedy of singular powers in the cases in which it has been fairly tried. I am disposed to believe that this medicine, if employed in the manner detailed by Dr. Currie, would be found more generally useful than any in the preceding list. It appears however to be most efficacious when administered during actual indisposition.

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Emetics and gentle purges are necessary when the stomach and bowels are inactive. Long continued salivation is recommended. Dr. Rush says, it may act in two ways, by depletion, and by the abstinence which attends this measure.

During the paroxysm all ligatures, bandages, and tight dress, must be loosed. The patient should be preserved in an easy, recumbent posture. Tobacco leaves may be applied to the pit of the stomach; or a decoction of a half a dram, or a dram, exhibited as an enema.

Having no original observations to offer of a practical kind, it is useless to dilate concerning the treatment.

